Frontenac
Its Beginning

Early Frontenac street scene

Frontenac -- Its Beginning

by

English IV Class of Frontenac High School - 1986

Karen Brust, Carol Gebhardt, Debbie Wente, Kristy Gintner, Kyra Coomes, Mrs. Loth, Sponsor, Bill Pallucca, Eric Friskel, Tom Ross, Anthony Menghini, Mike Zafuta, David Cerne.

Foreword

When we decided to write a history of Frontenac for our town's centennial, we knew we had taken on a huge task.

Many of the records that we needed had been either lost or destroyed. To add to our troubles, complete records were not kept in the early years.

As a class, we were able to work on the history during our class period only, which was one hour a day.

In trying to verify our information, we had a difficult time finding the facts we needed. We had to search through issues of the Frontenac Press and microfilm of the Pittsburg Headlight and Sun and the Girard Press. This work was very time consuming. We were able to retrieve some information from the book by L.S. Minckley, Americanization Through Education.

In our effort to publish a book that all of us could be proud of, we required the help of many people whom we would like to thank. These people include Ann Cassidy and Charlie Cicero. I would personally like to thank Mr. Cicero for entrusting me the only copies of the Frontenac Press that remain. We would also like to thank the entire Frontenac Centennial Committee and Gene De Gruson. We would like to extend a special thanks to Kay Saia, to Mr. Dino Spigarelli for his interest and encouragement, to Mr. Greg Hafner for his advice, to everyone who supplied us with pictures and to all who helped us in any way.

We hope you enjoy the book and are as proud of it as we are.

Eric Friskel

We thought it was appropriate to begin our book with a story of an Italian immigrant to show the courage, hardships, and intelligence which was so typical of the founders of our town.

His parents were poor share croppers in San Peligrino, Italy, with a family of five children they could not support, so Aurelio, at the age of eight, was sent to live with his grandparents.

Having to work to support himself, his formal education ended at the third grade level. His duties included herding sheep for days and nights on end with very little food, living mostly off the land.

In 1902, at the age of seventeen he came to the United States to join his father who was working in the coal mines in the mountains of Utah.

He landed at New York's Ellis Island, was de-loused and not knowing how to speak English, a tag was hung around his neck with his destination (Ogden, Utah) printed on it, and he was put on a train.

Traveling for several days and not being able to understand or speak to anyone, he ate only fruit and vegetables at train stops along the way. He paid the venders by holding out a handful of money and letting them take what they wanted.

In Utah, he mined coal in the side of a mountain with his father in a village owned by the coal company. In trying to form a union, the miners were forced out of town by the company with only the clothes they wore.

A cousin in Frontenac, Kansas wired them the train fare. They arrived in Frontenac, January 21, 1903. It was a beautiful spring like day which suddenly turned into a howling blizzard, and as he told it, he almost froze while walking to his cousin's house.

Saving his money and working long hours, he was able to buy a house and send for his mother, two sisters and a younger brother.

Thirsting for knowledge, he and a group of young immigrants of several different nationalities paid a minister fifty cents each per week to teach them to read and write English.

Wanting a better life than mining, he began working as a clerk in a cooperative general store, and later with a fellow clerk, bought the store which was located at the Northeast corner of McKay and Cherokee Street, known as Brunetti and Matarazzi Grocery.

As coal mines shut down during the depression, miners were unable to pay the bills, and the store was closed.

He went back to the mines for a short time and then reopened at the same locations at the Brunetti Grocery.

Aurelio Brunetti died September 15, 1969.

In May, 1886, a sixteen year old boy came to settle in Frontenac. He was born in Illinois and moved to Liberal, Missouri, soon after the death of his mother. When James Devore heard of a new mine opening in Frontenac, he set out in search of work. Mr. Devore started out on foot. He was given a ride by a man driving a covered wagon but was dropped off three miles from his destination.

He walked the remaining miles and ended up in the place that is now known as Frontenac. James found himself in a place where there were no houses, no stores, and no people. He pitched a tent to stay in until the other miners came seeking this new place for work. The site on which he pitched his tent is the land on which the Methodist Church now stands. And so, the first of many settlers arrived and consequently, the history of a small town in Southeast Kansas began.

Frontenac is an interesting place where many diverse and contrasting cultures and customs have fused together to form a cherished heritage, a heritage rich in tradition.

The natural dam in the west central part of what is now Frontenac was broken and the lake released before many had settled in Frontenac. This facilitated the settling of the area by the miners brought in by the Santa Fe Railroad in the 1880's. There was world wide advertising for immigrants to settle and mine this area. The advertisements brought response from such countries as: Italy, Austria, Germany, France, Ireland, England, Belgium, Wales, Mexico, Sweden, Scotland, Norway, Hungary, Holland, Greece, Syria and Canada.

As these immigrants arrived, they generally banded together in certain parts of the area in relation to their nationalities and customs.

Frontenac was a typical example of a "boom town". It, like many other small towns at that time, sprang up almost overnight due to the discovery of rich coal deposits and the influx of coal miners. Frontenac as a community did not appear on the scene until 1886 with the opening of Santa Fe mine No. 1.

This opening marked the beginning of several other such mines. It is apparent that the Santa Fe railroad was responsible for the building of Frontenac.

It initiated the mines, hauled the coal, and fed the families.

When the small mining camp originated, it was first known as Santa Fe number 1. Later, it was called Craigville because of Robert Craig, then manager of the Southern Kansas Railroad Co. (later named Santa Fe).

There has been much speculation concerning the question of how Frontenac received its name.

Topeka requested that an official name be given, so Mr. Craig submitted the name Craigville. As far as everyone was concerned, it was just a matter of Topeka recording it.

An item from the Girard Press, December 16, 1886 gives this information: "It has been hard work for the Southern Kansas railroad people to find a name for the new town in Washington township, situated at the end of the road. Mr. Craig, the superintendent of the coal works, was in Topeka during last week, and was astounded when the name of Frontenac was announced. Hereafter it will be known as Frontenac, Crawford County instead of Craigville."

Since the advertisement brought so many miners from foreign lands to this area, it was essential that the coal company build some places for them to stay.

Some news items from the Girard Press recorded the following: November 18, 1886. "There are eleven houses raised in Craigville, the new town on the Southern Kansas railroad of which seven are enclosed. A man from Osage, Kansas, moved into the big boarding house Tuesday, and will be ready for boarders in a few days.

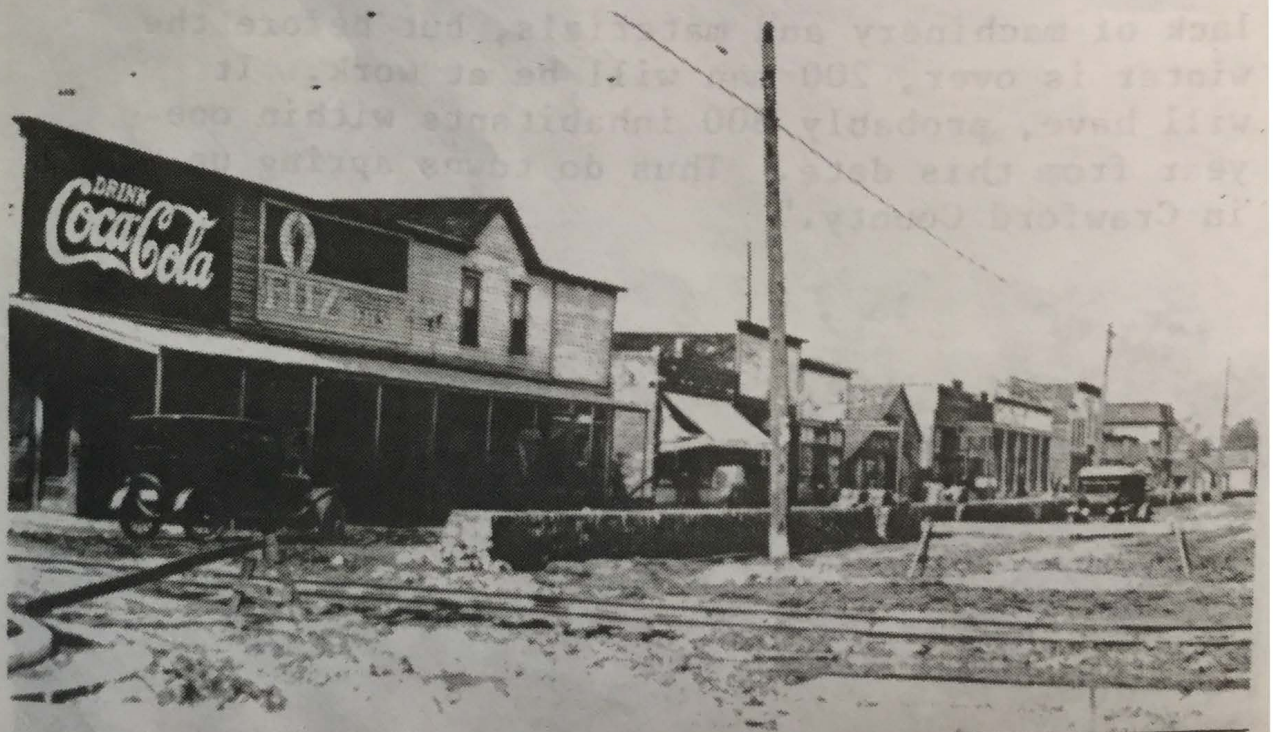
A large force of men are at work on the pit top (coal shaft #2) and will soon have it ready for business."

December 2, 1886: "The twenty-four new houses at Craigville, Washington township, present a very neat appearance... Every house is plastered, painted, roof and all, and behind each is a cistern with a chain pump. The houses are placed over a hundred feet apart, and the streets are more than a hundred feet wide. The new depot... will have telegraphic communications with Girard. Mr. Craig, the accommodating manager of the coal works, informs us that the company has been delayed in the construction of the shafts by lack of machinery and materials, but before the winter is over, 200 men will be at work. It will have, probably 800 inhabitants within one year from this date. Thus do towns spring up in Crawford County."

Early Frontenac Home

The productiveness of the mines kept the population on a steady increase. On August 1, 1895, Frontenac was incorporated as a third-class city at the first city council meeting. The city was divided into four wards with McKay Street as the dividing line of the north and south sections. Each of these two sections were then divided with Jefferson street dividing the two south sides and Crawford street dividing the two north wards.

J.S. Patton was elected mayor and A.L. Majors served as city clerk. The first city council was comprised of W.H. Woodheck, Hugh Ferguson, Jacob Dittman and Charles Friskel. At a meeting the following day, Dr. J.M. Giddings was elected president of the council, John Beitzinger, city treasurer and August Hulet was appointed marshal. This was indeed a busy time for the city officials since they were laying the ground work for this infant town.



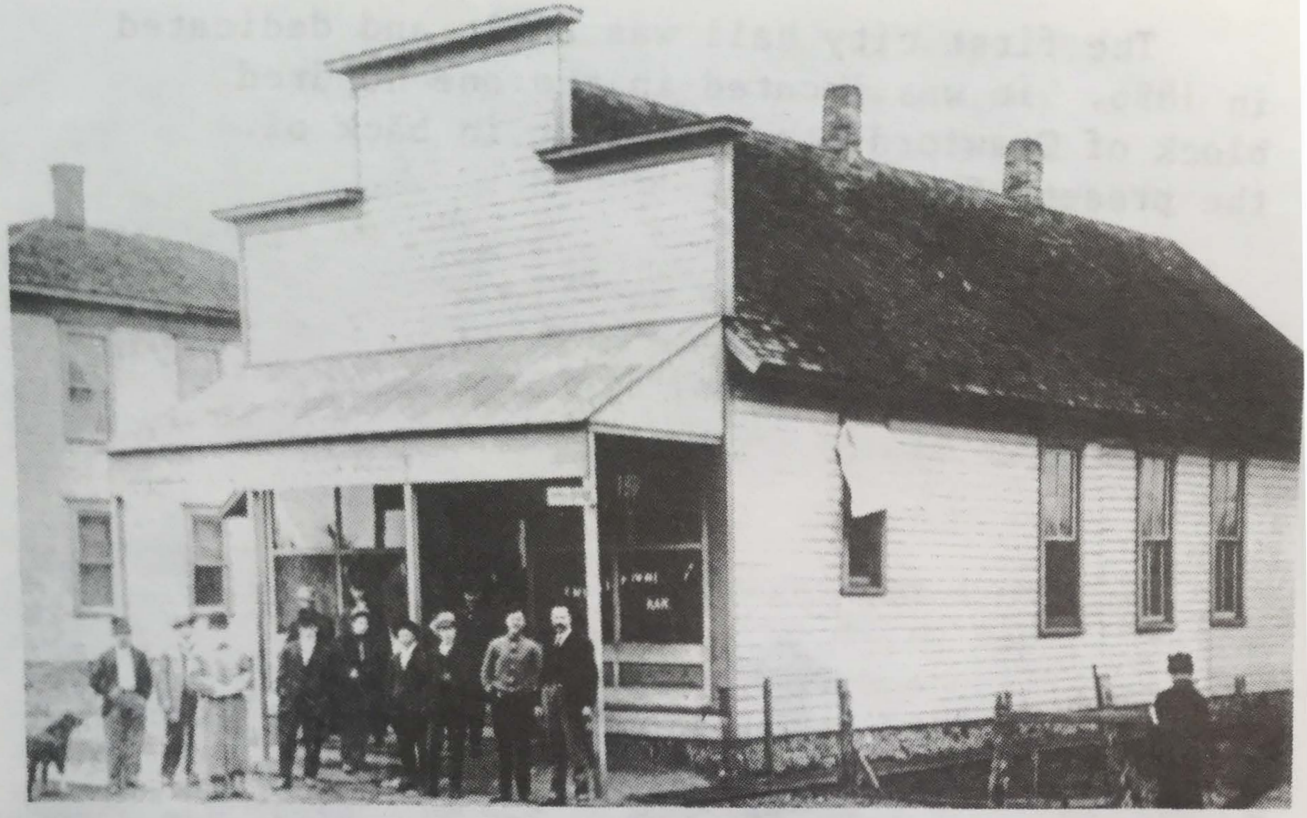
Street Scene

The idea of incorporation did not appeal to all the residents in the community, but the town continued to grow and Frontenac was classified as a second class city on February 9, 1907.

The first city hall was built and dedicated in 1896. It was located in the one hundred block of Crawford Street, right in back of the present Eagles Hall.

City Hall 1914

In 1912, a cave-in occurred on a side of the city hall which cracked the wall and misaligned the entire structure. The building continued to be used for two years, but it was believed to be unsafe and liable to collapse. According to a news item in the Pittsburg Sun (1914), it was decided that "since repairs are useless because the entire building is located on an undermined foundation" a new city hall would be built somewhere else on a substantial foundation. The site of the present city hall was selected, and the building was completed in the fall of 1914. This building still serves as the seat of government in Frontenac.



Post Office

The post office was a most important meeting place in the early days of the city. It was established on June 23, 1887, and was located on the south side of McKay Street in the F.P. Waskey General Store. The first postmaster was Cash Edson. Later, it was moved to the corner of McKay and Depot (Linn) Streets. It remained there until 1957. The post office was then moved to its present location on McKay Street. In October of 1959, Frontenac began home delivery.

The police department was organized in 1886. It consisted of two marshals, a day marshal and a night marshal. This type of protection endured until 1968.

Frontenac's police department now employs a police chief, three commissioned patrolmen and four dispatchers. One of the dispatchers is also the assistant city clerk.

Because of the unstable conditions always present in the many mines around the area, the fire department of early Frontenac was quite large. It was composed of thirty-six firemen and three fire stations. Twelve men were

appointed to each one of the stations. A hose cart was kept at each location. Station Number one was at the city hall where the fire bell was housed on a tower at the side of the building.

Station number two was in the west part of the city, and station number three was on the north side across the Santa Fe tracks.

Firemen were alerted to a fire by the fire bell. When an alarm was given, a number of fast strokes was sounded plus the number of the ward. This was how the firemen knew where the fire was.

Each fireman was paid one dollar where water was used.

The present fire department consists of eighteen men, all volunteers. They are notified of a fire by the telephone system or a radio pager system or on their personal radios. Fire fighters receive five dollars per fire, regardless of the amount of time spent at the fire.

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Cemeteries:

In 1894, Rev. J.A. Pompeney, pastor of Sacred Heart Church, obtained two and one half acres of land from the Santa Fe east of town which he had plotted for a cemetery.

In 1904, he secured an additional two and one half acres and in 1922, another two and one half acres were purchased making a total of seven and one half acres.

On March 11, 1904, Charles J. Devlin granted a plot of land to the city to be used as a cemetery right across the road from the Catholic cemetery.

Parks:

Frontenac's first attempt to secure a park was on May 17, 1898, when the city acquired land from the Santa Fe. In 1905, it was decided to build a water works plant on that site.

The city was without a park until 1917. The site chosen was at the north end of Crawford Street. A park board was formed, and it was decided that "with improvements it would be equal to most of the small town parks." The official opening of the park was celebrated by creating a holiday for the entire town. It was known as Frontenac Day in honor of the anniversary of Frontenac starting as a town. The date was Thursday, May 10, 1917.

The event was described by L.S. Minckley, Superintendent of Schools of USD #249:

"It was a perfect day. The mines were shut down; neighboring camps had been invited to attend; all places of business were closed. Never before in the history of the city was there a day when all business was suspended to such an extent. At nine in the morning, the parade started from the Washington Building, headed by "Old Glory," followed by the band and school children; as they turned on McKay Street, citizens in cars and on foot joined from all directions.

At the noon hour it was estimated that there were over three thousand persons in the timber. An address of welcome was given by the mayor. The Catholic priest, the Methodist minister, and the first mayor of the city were the local speakers...a good feeling prevailed all the day.

May Day in Frontenac

This park was used for many years. The land is still owned by the city but is no longer maintained.

The reorganization of the Frontenac baseball team, the Frontenac Merchants in 1937, was indirectly responsible for the present city park located on East McKay Street. Because they had no ball park of their own, it was decided to build a diamond for them."

The Frontenac Press, Friday, April 23, 1937, stated:

There is no lack of talent for the team, for which a field will be prepared east of town under the name of Miner's Park."

During the construction of the field, Mike Falletti died of a heart attack. He had contributed a great amount of time to the construction of the back stop and the fence. As a tribute to his devotion to the construction of the field, the name was changed to Mike Falletti Field to honor him.

Due to the easy accessibility to this field, it eventually grew into a city park. It now contains three ball diamonds, a swimming pool and wading pool, and a paved entrance to the park.

Utilities:

In the early days of Frontenac, kerosene was used for lighting and coal was used for heating.

It was not until March 11, 1904, that a franchise was granted to the Mount Carmel Coal Company that electric lights were first installed.

On March 9, 1905, telegraph and telephone companies were granted the right by the city to place telegraph and telephone poles in the city and to operate there. The original telephone office was located at McKay and Linn. Later it was moved to a house on 105 North Linn. Mrs. Verna Koopman, the first telephone operator, lived at the residence. The telephones did not have dials or push-buttons, so the operators put through all the calls for the people of Frontenac. When dial telephones were introduced in 1954, Verna Koopman retired, and the Pittsburg telephone office took care of all Frontenac calls.

Until 1907, Frontenac residents had to obtain water from the Santa Fe railroad, located two blocks east of Grasshopper Corner. It was during this year that the Chicago Bridge and Iron Works installed a 75,000 gallon water tank and reservoir which held 350,000 gallons. The water was supplied from two wells, one 1046 ft. deep and the other 1064 feet deep. The water plant was owned by the city. The first superintendent was Bill Monahan.

In 1927, the sewer system was introduced to Frontenac. This proved to be quite an arduous task.

Putting in the sewer line

In the winter of 1958, a whiteway was installed to connect Pittsburg to Frontenac with an illuminated roadway.

Frontenac was a coal town for more than half a century. Its people were completely loyal to coal.

Not until the coal dropped out of the local economy did thoughts turn to gas. Efforts began in 1939 by area residents to obtain gas for Frontenac, but it took them twenty years to reach that goal. On July 3, 1959, a ceremony was held to mark the beginning of a convenient gas service for Frontenac. The ceremony was held at the south city limits on Mount Carmel Road, and was arranged by H.S. Hicks, manager of the Gas Service Company. The ceremony was marked by the turning of the valve to begin the flow of gas by Frontenac's mayor Joe Cinotto. The first gas flame was lit by Joe Saia, a member of the county commission.

Mining:

Frontenac first came into being as a coal mining camp when Santa Fe railroad formed the Cherokee and Pittsburg Coal and Mining Company. This company leased land underlaid with coal in the vicinity of the present site of Frontenac, and in 1886, mine No. 1 was sunk and the mining camp of Frontenac had its inception. As a camp it flourished and eventually became a second class city.

Deep Mine

Robert Craig was made superintendent of mine No. 1 and later became general manager of the company. Within a few months, mine No. 2 was sunk. This mine was destined to later go down in history as having been the scene of the greatest mine disaster in the state of Kansas. It occurred on November 9, 1988 claiming forty-seven lives.

The Pittsburg Headlight carried an extensive story of the disaster the following day and follow up stories for many days later. Following are extracts from the Headlight's edition of Saturday, November 10, 1988.

"Yesterday evening witnessed the most terrible holocaust that ever occurred in this mining district or the West. Mine No. 2 of the Pittsburg and Cherokee (Santa Fe) Mining

Company at Frontenac blew up causing a horrible toll of life. Number of lives lost is not known. Men in the mine at the time of the explosion numbered 164. Many of them made their way out alive and uninjured.

"At least 2,000 men, women and children are gathered around the shaft of the mine. The cries of those whose husbands or fathers are known to be below are heartrending. Entrance to the mine is being achieved as fast as is humanely possible, but the main entrance is absolutely blocked and imminent danger attends every attempt by the air shaft.

"Men are driven to desperation by pitiful appeals by weeping women and girls to get their husbands and fathers and boys out before they all die. Snow and rain have been falling continuously since the explosion yesterday evening at 5 o'clock. Half-clad women shiver and huddle about the top of the shaft pleading for someone to give them tidings of their loved ones.

"Every available doctor from Pittsburg, Girard, Litchfield and other places from over the district are at the shaft ready to give emergency treatment.

"More than 100 men are believed to be lying dead in the mine. Those who escaped report horrifying tales of the explosion and after fire which blasted its way through the workings.

"The violence of the shock rocked Pittsburg and all surrounding territory. Half an hour after the explosion a ragged, bleeding man staggered into Pittsburg, He said that all the men in the mine except himself and one other had been killed.

"Horses quickly were harnessed to wagons and soon the villagers were hurrying

through a fierce snow and sleet storm to the scene of the disaster.

"Rescue parties have endeavored to enter the mine but have been driven back by foul air. The air fans were demolished by the explosions and men are working frantically to replace them so air can be sent into the mine."

On Monday, following the disaster, the sorrowful task of burying the dead was begun. A Santa Fe special train brought one group of seventeen bodies early in the morning and they were buried side by side in one trench at the Catholic cemetery. Funeral rites were conducted at the side of the huge grave.

More than 3,000 gathered at the cemetery and filled the line of the funeral cortege from the depot to the cemetery.

Walked Out Of A Tomb

The Headlight of Monday, November 12, carried the following story:

"About 5 o'clock this morning searchers at the bottom of the shaft were almost petrified with astonishment to see a man groping his way out from the east side, in which all search had been abandoned following announcement by searching parties that it had been thoroughly searched and was ready to be sealed up.

The man was brought to the surface of the cage. He was Harry Burns of Girard. He was able to walk about and wash himself. He was knocked unconscious by the explosion and lay unconscious in the mine all night Friday, all day Saturday morning and groped his way to the bottom of the shaft. He said he did not know there had been an explosion, but thought it had been his own shot that knocked him senseless."

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The C. and P. Company became the operating company of several mines in the district, numbering among them some of the largest and most modern even in the area. In 1897, it became known as the Mount Carmel Coal Company, headed by C.J. Devlin. He later owned controlling interest in and operated Devlin-Miller Mine No. 11.

In 1903, the Cherokee and Pittsburg company again took over operation of its mines which later became the Jackson-Walker Coal and Mining Company.

Mining continued to be the most prosperous business in this area. During the years between 1901 and 1904, Frontenac's north district of mines produced one fifth of the coal in the state of Kansas. This district was considered the principal shipper of coal over the Santa Fe railroad. During the year 1915, 45,600 car loads of bituminous coal were shipped from this point.

There were two kinds of mining operations in the Frontenac area - deep mining and strip mining. Deep mine or underground mining in this vicinity utilized the room and pillar system. An entrance to the vein of coal was made. This was called sinking the shaft. The shaft was usually about eight feet square and was encased with wooden planks from the top to the bottom.

The coal vein was generally located about 100 feet below the surface of the earth. An elevator, or "cage" as the miners called it, was installed. When the shaft had been lowered to the bottom of the vein of coal, then entries were dug on opposite sides. These entries were about two hundred feet long, seven feet high and wide enough for a double track for coal cars.

From this passage, the miners would dig into the side and form small "rooms." Each miner had his own room and here he worked - digging the coal with a pick and shovel,

Miners underground

loading his car, and pushing it out to the entry to be taken to the top.

The miner was paid by the number of tons of coal he mined. Each miner had a brass number plate and his car was numbered accordingly. The weight of eachcar was kept according to that number. The car was weighed twice, once by a man employed by the company, and again by the man employed by the miners. Each car held about three-fourths of a ton. The miners usually averaged about six or seven cars per day.

Deep mine mining was the most dangerous method of mining coal. Working in quarters with ceilings no more than four feet high, the partitions between the rooms were the only support for the roof. Cave-ins, falling rocks, accidental explosions, and poison gases posed threats to the miners' lives every day.

The miners and their families lives were filled with uncertainty. Their well being was governed by the sound of the mine whistle.

Since the miners did not work every day, they would listen for the mine whistle to know when to report to work.

If there were to be no work the following day, the mine whistle would blow once, a long blast at 4 pm. If there were to be work the next day, the whistle would blow three times at 4 pm and again the next morning at 6:30 and 7:30.

In case of an accident or explosion at the mine, the whistle would sound four times - a sound that struck fear in everyone in the town.

Strip mining was the other form of mining. It was different in many ways from deep mining. Most strip mines fall in on the same basic method to produce coal. The area to be mined was first cleared and leveled. Then small holes were drilled through the rock and dirt to the coal bed. Each hole was loaded with explosives. The explosives were then set off, thus shattering the rock and making it easier to reach the coal.

Area mining, practiced where the land was relatively level, was the type of strip mining done in this area. in area mining, an earth

mover dug up the rocks and dirt and piled them on both sides of the cut away from the mining area. The spoils formed what was referred to as a spoil bank. After the coal was dug, the next cut was begun right next to the first cut. The spoils from this cut were placed in the first cut. This procedure was continued until all the coal had been mined.

The many strip pits that surround Frontenac are the evidence of this kind of mining.

Doctors:

Doctors were scarce in the late 1800's, but Frontenac was fortunate in having three to locate here. The number of mines and the increasing population was an enticement to young doctors.

Dr. James Milo Giddings was the first doctor to locate in Frontenac. He was a native of Pittson, Pennsylvania. He was a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania Medical School in Philadelphia. Dr. Giddings located in Frontenac in 1886. After the death of his wife in 1896, he and his children moved to Illinois.

Dr. Volney L. Boaz, a native of Kentucky, was the second doctor to locate in Frontenac. He received his medical degree from Baltimore Medical College in 1895. He first located in Girard, but enlisted in the Twentieth Kansas Unit where he was detailed to the hospital service. After serving eighteen months in the Phillipines, he returned to practice medicine in Frontenac in 1898.

The third doctor to appear on the scene was Dr. Merhl Kirkpatrick Scott. Dr. Scott was a native Kansan. He received his medical degree from Belle Memorial College (Kansas University Medical Center). He located in

Frontenac in 1901, as a physician and surgeon to the Mount Carmel Coal Company. Dr. Scott practiced medicine here until his death in 1934. His first office was located at 117 Depot Street. He then moved to a brick building next door to the Frontenac Confectionery on McKay Street. Dr. Scott was a secretary of the Frontenac State Bank, served on the Board of Education, and a member of the Frontenac Commercial Club.

Lodges and Clubs:

There were many different fraternal organizations and clubs during the early days of the town. They provided an opportunity for conversation, games, entertainment and dancing for the immigrants. The different nationalities each had their own order and spoke their own native language in the lodge.

German Hall

The German Aid Association was the first lodge to emerge. It was organized July 21, 1889. They held their meetings in the German Hall on the first Thursday of the month.

There were one hundred members registered in this lodge.

The Austrian Lodge number one was organized on January 1, 1892. This was a large lodge as its membership numbered over five hundred. They met once a week in their own hall. The Austrian Hall was a large two story building located on East McKay Street. The first floor housed the Brunetti Matarazzi grocery store and Peoples Funeral Parlor. The second floor was used for meetings and the various social activities of the lodge.

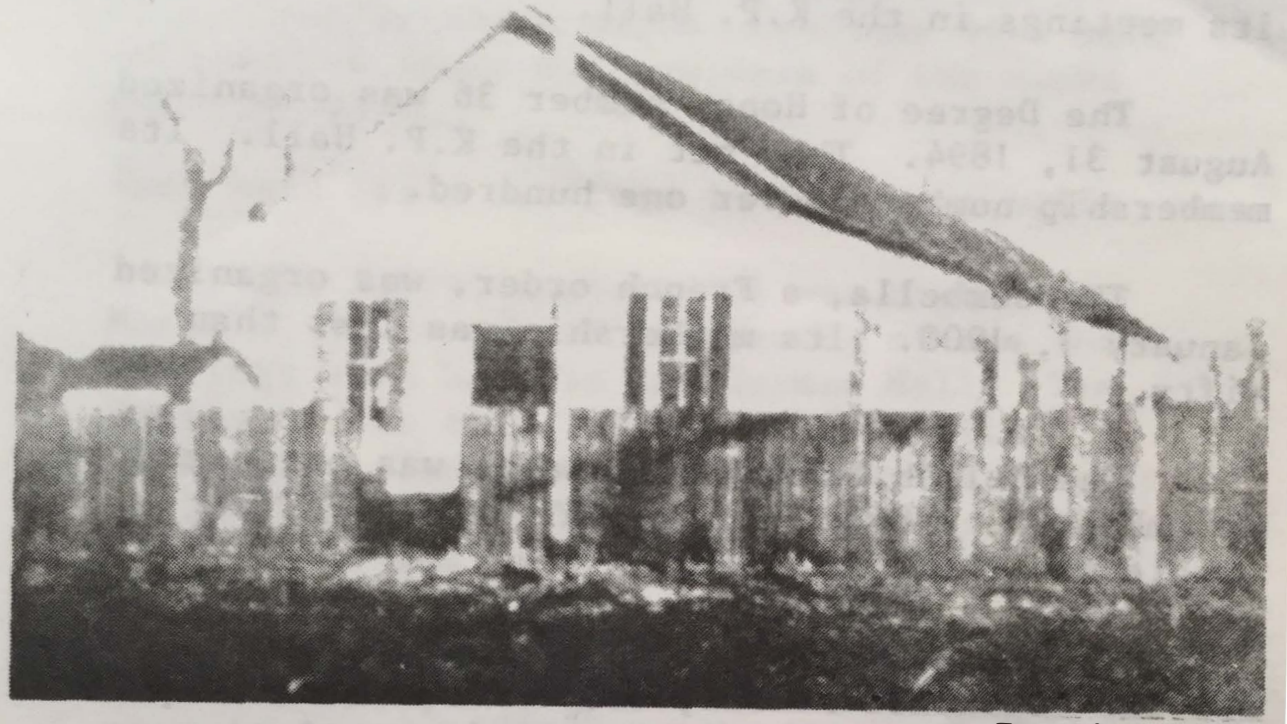
Austrian Lodge

All lodge business was conducted in the Austrian language. The members frequently had celebrations in which the manners and customs of the home land was celebrated.

The next Austrian order, the Santa Barbara number 47 was organized September, 1900.

The Austrian Firol Andrda Hofer was the third order organized March 5, 1910.

There were three Italian orders in early Frontenac. The first, La Victtoria, was organized September 20, 1891. It had a membership of over two hundred.



Italian Hall

Foresters of America Court of Pittsburg was the second Italian order. It was organized September 1, 1896. It also had a membership of over two hundred.

The third Italian order, the Stella D' Oriente, a society for young Italian men was organized on September 1, 1898. It had a membership of over one hundred.

The three orders all held their meetings in the Italian Hall and spoke the Italian language. All the business was transacted in the Italian language.

The Knights of Pythias was organized November 21, 1890. Their meetings were held in their own hall - better known as the K.P. Hall.

The Black Diamond lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows was organized September 26, 1894. It met weekly and held all its meetings in the K.P. Hall.

The Independent Order of United Workmen number 381 was organized July 1894. It held its meetings in the K.P. Hall.

The Degree of Honor number 36 was organized August 31, 1894. They met in the K.P. Hall. Its membership numbered over one hundred.

The Gambella, a French order, was organized January 1, 1900. Its membership was less than fifty.

The Polish National Alliance was organized November 25, 1906. Nearly one hundred Polish people were members.

The Sons and Daughters of Justice number 385 was organized June 1, 1911. Its membership numbered almost two hundred. Their meetings were held in the K.P. Hall.

Miner's Hall

The Pythian Sisters was organized November 7, 1913. Their meetings were also held in the K.P. Hall.

One of the most active organizations in early Frontenac was the United Mine Workers of America. Each of the five large mines of this vicinity had a union. Meetings were held once a week where all business of the mines was discussed.

They held their meetings in their own hall.

The Eagles number 2034 was organized March 6, 1915. In the beginning of the lodge, meetings were held in the German Hall. The Eagles is the only lodge that is still in existence. They now own their own hall located at 302 E. McKay. The Eagles Lodge is still very active and vital in the life of the community.

In 1919, the Frontenac American Legion was started. It began with the post number two, but a year later was asked by the state to give it up and take the number forty-three as its post number. The post was named after John F. Debry, the first man from Frontenac to be killed in World War I. The legion began with only forty-six members, today there are ninety-five. It is located at 503 North Labette and holds meetings every Thursday evening. George Cameron, Commander, and legion members perform a service which includes putting up the flags that encircle the road at the main entrance to both cemeteries on Memorial Day. Each flag commemorates a service man who is deceased. They arrange for the selection of a delegate and an alternate delegate to be sent to the American Legion's Boys State. The American Legion provides a unique social activity for American Veterans.

The Frontenac Rotary Club was founded on February 3, 1979 with twenty nine members after

receiving sponsorship from the Pittsburg Rotary Club. Stressing high professional and business ethics, they have done much for the Frontenac community.

Each year two Frontenac High School Seniors are awarded scholarships. Donations are made to both Frontenac Churches and the Salvation Army at Christmas, as well as giving Christmas baskets to needy families.

Over $5,000 has been put into the Frontenac city park, and many dollars were given to Mt. Carmel Medical Center for a special pre-natal scope. Also, the Frontenac Rotarians sponsored a circus in 1984 for the community's entertainment. The Rotarians have done much for Frontenac and its citizens and continue to do so.

Churches:

Throughout its one hundred years existence, Frontenac has only had two churches in the town. They were and still are an integral part of the community.

First Catholic Church and School

Holy mass was celebrated for the first time in Frontenac in the home of Andrew Wachter, Sr., on South Cherokee Street in May, 1887. Later on services were held two Sundays a month in the public school building. The reverend pastors of St. Mary's church, Pittsburg, had charge until 1896. Reverend F.S. Hawelka was the first pastor (1892-1894). Father Hawelka was succeed by Rev. Dr. J.A. Pompeney (1894-1895). During his administration a small frame church was erected with a room attached that served as a school. He was followed by Rev. A.P. Podgarsek, (1895-98) who was the first resident pastor appointed for Frontenac by Bishop Hennessey, Father Podgarsek enlarged the school by adding three more rooms.

Catholic Church and School about 1929

His successor was Rev. George W. Frefe (1898-1902). During his pastorate the rectory was built. In 1901, he began the erection of the second and larger church which served the congregation until it was destroyed by fire on March 30, 1940. This church, however,

was not completed until 1903, by his successor Rev. Joseph Schuetz, who was in charge from 1902-1904.

Rev. Schuetz was succeeded by the return of Rev. Dr. J.A. Pompeny who was in charge of the parish for eight years, from 1904-1912, during the turbulent years of labor strikes.

In 1912, Bishop Hennessey invited the Sylvestrine Benedictine Fathers from Italy to his Diocese. He felt that only Italian priests could properly take care of the religious needs of the predominantly Italian communities which centered around Pittsburg and Chicopee. The Sylvestrine Fathers remained in Frontenac until 1929.

Bishop August Schwertner then invited the Capuchin Fathers to take charge. The Rev. Julius Becher, O.F.M. Cap. was pastor from 1929 to 1939. Father Ildephonse succeeded him.

The church was destroyed by fire on March 30, 1949. The fire was caused by a spark from burning trash. Since the old four room school was also in bad condition, it was decided by the building committee to dismantle both buildings and to erect the combination church and school. The new church was dedicated April 19, 1941. The church is still in use today.

In 1890, a group of Methodists banded together, and (because they did not have enough money to build a church) received permission to worship in the Santa Fe depot. It also housed the Sunday School.

East McKay Street was the first location of the Methodist Church. It was built in 1895 during Rev. J.M. Dunlavey's stay in Frontenac. It was ready for use in 1896, and a parsonage was added in 1905.

FRONTENAC ELEMENTARY LIBRARY

Early Methodist Church and Parsonage

This church served the people of Frontenac until December 22, 1946 when it was destroyed by fire. Services had to be held in the Sunday school building until a new church could be constructed. A fund drive was initiated, and a new location was decided upon--the corner of Cayuga and Lanyon.

Construction began in March of 1947 at the site. Church services were held in the new church sanctuary on January 25, 1948, and dedication ceremonies were held on September 25, 1948.

A permanent parsonage arrangement was established in Pittsburg for the pastor in 1961, as part of a two-point charge with Pittsburg's Grace United Methodist Church.

An education building was constructed in 1963 to serve as a Sunday School for children. It also has served the community in other ways since its erection.

Methodist Church 1986

Schools:

"America is the best country and government in the world. The reason why I love this country is because I am free and independent, and it is possible for my sons and daughters to be educated, and rise to the top. Not only my children, but all children no matter what are the conditions...My main ambition is to see my children educated in the American schools and customs; to be grown to manhood and womanhood with a patriotic love that an American citizen should have..." This statement by Antone Menghini, Sr. exemplifies the deep feeling of the immigrants for education.

Small house believed to be first school.

The schools have always played a vital role in this small community. The town was still in its infant stages when the first school opened its doors. The three "R's" were taught in a house located on Depot Street. This small school was short lived because of the increase in population.

Washington School

Around the turn of the century, the first brick schoolhouse was built in the two hundred block on South Crawford Street. It became known as the Washington Building.

The continued growth of the coal industry and the shipment of the coal by rail caused problems in safety for many children. The Santa Fe operated on seven tracks with a full time flagman employed to handle the traffic. Because so many children lived across the tracks in North Frontenac, it was decided to build another grade school (grades 1 to 6). The brick building was erected on North Cayuga in 1910 and was known as the North School. (The official name was Columbus School). The year before the North School opened, the number 249 was designated as the district number. The North School operated until 1927, and then all the classes were moved to the Washington Building.

North School

In the early years of the education system of Frontenac, no grades for work were given. Many children who came to school could not speak English; so for them, it made learning by

regular standards impossible. The philosophy for this type of education was that a grade was not important - learning was. A child advanced as he mastered a certain level of reading. This concept in education today is known as individualized instruction or group ability. The first letter grades were given in 1915, when the colleges requested them for admission for their programs.

Frontenac's first high school was established in September, 1911, with ten students registered for the ninth grade. Classes were held in a room in the basement of the Washington Building. Each year a class was added, and in September of 1914, Frontenac had a full, four year high school. Classes continued to be held in the basement rooms.

Frontenac High School received its accreditation in the fall of 1913. The state inspector told the students at an assembly, "This is the only high school in the State of Kansas in a basement, and it gives me great pleasure to state that the work is being done in a satisfactory manner. I shall recommend that the Frontenac High School be placed on the accredited list at the meeting of the accrediting committee."

The first graduating class was then organized with two members from the original class of ten. They were required to take a class in physics at the State Normal School (now Pittsburg State University) in order to have enough credits to graduate.

The graduation of 1914 was indeed a major accomplishment for the city of Frontenac. L.S. Minckley, the Superintendent at the time, described the first graduation in his book, Americanization Through Education:

"The stage had been beautifully decorated with roses by the Junior Class. It was the time of year when the roses were in bloom. Frontenac is a city of roses and every child in the school brought a beautiful bouquet. At nine o'clock on the morning of commencement day the two seniors, Margaret Monahan and Essie Jones, were seated in the basement upon the little rostrum that had served as a stage in the past year when the students from the high school and pupils from all the grades in both the Washington and Columbus buildings came with their beautiful bouquets of roses and presented them to the first graduates. There were over six hundred bouquets and they were used to decorate the stage in the opera house of the Miner's hall for the commencement that evening. There was no picture taken so the reader will have to imagine a stage decorated with six hundred bouquets of roses. Every child from the least in the primary department to the seniors in the high school felt that he was a part of the first commencement."

The curriculum of Frontenac's first high school was much different from the curriculum today. The ninth grade course of study was algebra, Latin, English and physical geography. The tenth grade studied English, Caesar, prose composition, plane geometry, and ancient history. Typing and stenography were optional. The courses for the eleventh grade were English, Cicero, solid geometry, and botany. The Senior course consisted of English, chemistry, Virgil, and domestic science. The electives were business, agriculture, domestic art, domestic science, manual training and music.

In the summer of 1914, a bond election was held and passed for an addition to the Washington Building to be used for the high school. The addition was completed in the spring of 1915.

This building continued to serve as the school until May 19, 1925, when the main building of the school was destroyed by fire. It was believed that a short from a fuse box struck the boiler, causing it to explode. The definite cause of the fire is still unknown.

Washington School after the fire.

A large number of men and boys assisted in the clean up of the school grounds. The bricks were cleaned and stacked in order to be used for the new school building. The spirit of the citizens was to rebuild as rapidly as possible and as inexpensively as possible. The estimated cost of savings from the volunteers' work was over 1,000 dollars.

Permission was granted by the State School Fund Commission on June 9, 1925, for an election for the townspeople of Frontenac. The election was needed in order to vote on a seventy-five thousand dollar bond issue necessary for the construction of a new school. On July 1, the election was held, and eighty percent of the voters favored the bond issue.

The Alumni Association of Frontenac also helped in raising needed funds. A Fourth Of July Celebration was held at Lincoln Park in Pittsburg where many types of fund-raising

events were conducted throughout the day. The profits were put into the fund for the new school by the association's president, Phillip Vessadini.

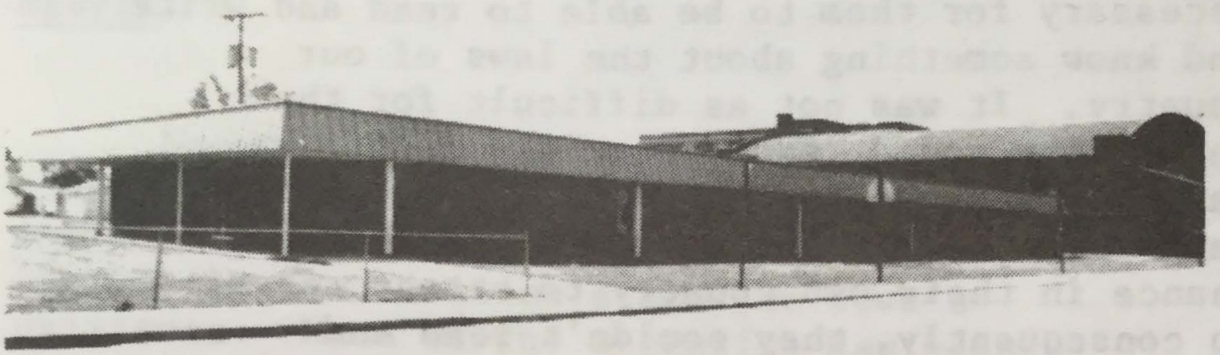
While the new school was being constructed, classes were held in many places such as the Community Hall, the Austrian Hall, the Eagles Hall, and the Methodist Hall.

The new school was completed in 1927 and continues to serve the community today, although many changes have taken place since it was constructed.

A cafeteria and gymnasium were added to the building in 1956. Even today, it is one of the nicest gyms in the area for a town of Frontenac's size.

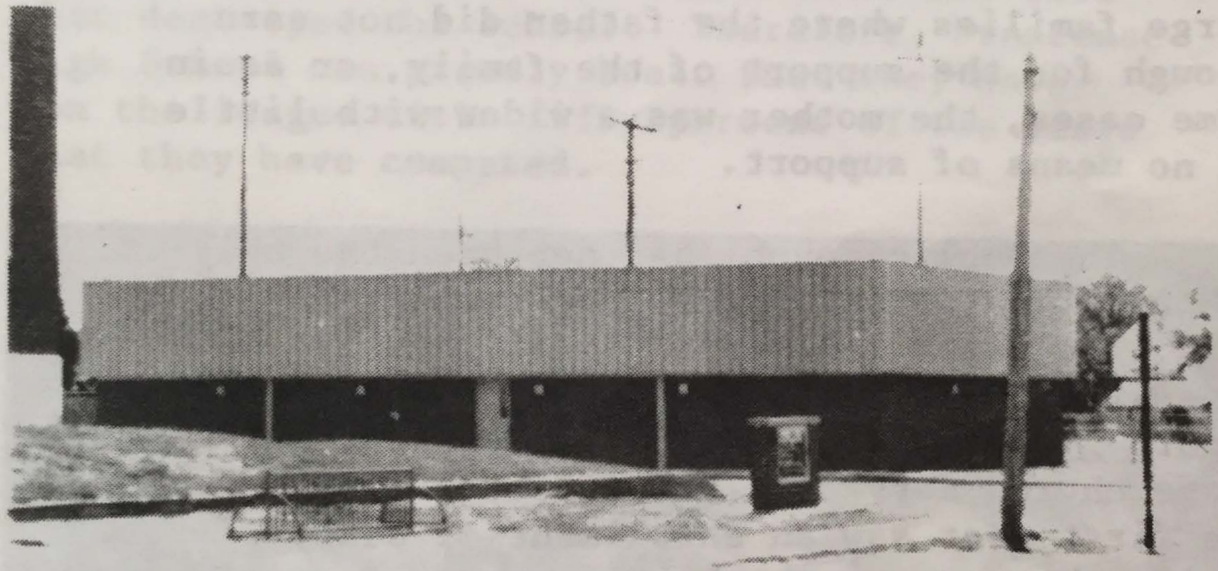
Frontenac High School today

In 1968, the Frank Layden Elementary School was built. It houses children in kindergarten and grades three to five while the sixth grade is on the first floor of the high school. Grades one and two use the Westside Building (Catholic School.



Frank Layden Elementary School

Another building south of the high school was completed in the summer of 1984. It serves as the home of the music department.



Music Building 1984

Frontenac can certainly be proud of its accomplishments in the field of education. It has come a long way from the house on Depot Street.

Education in the early days of Frontenac did not stop with the last year of high school. Night classes were held for the adults. Mining and first aid were taught in one class, and preparing immigrants for naturalization was taught in the other class. The class in naturalization was offered to people who had applied for their first papers. In order to receive

their final papers or citizenship, it was necessary for them to be able to read and write and know something about the laws of our country. It was not as difficult for the person who could read and write in his own language to learn to do the same in English. Many who came to this community never had the chance in their own country to attend school so consequently, they couldn't read and write. For them, it was indeed a difficult task to gain citizenship.

There were also classes in arithmetic, penmenship, spelling and bookkeeping taught at night for the young people who had attended school but had to stop and go to work in the mines or elsewhere as soon as the law would permit. These students were mostly from large families where the father did not earn enough for the support of the family, or as in some cases, the mother was a widow with little or no means of support.

The public school has not been the only school to serve the Frontenac community. In 1892, the Catholic church established a school to serve the Catholic children through the eighth grade. A room attached to the small frame church served as the initial classroom. The first year saw an enrollment of sixty pupils who were taught by two nuns. Soon after, another three rooms were added. After a new church was built in 1902, the old church was remodeled into a school, and a third teacher was employed.

A fourth nun was soon appointed to help with the teaching. In 1940, after the burning of the church, it was decided to erect a combination church and school. With a growing enrollment and cramped classrooms, a new school was built in 1958. The school was closed in 1967 because of a decrease in enrollment.

Sports:

Frontenac has had a long and colorful history of athletic participation and achievement. Residents have participated in various recreational activities since the town's existence. Much of the attention has been focused on the different high school sports.

Football has probably been the highlight of Frontenac's sports tradition. The high school has consistently posted good teams. To date (1985) Frontenac has won its league title thirty times since 1922, the first year of participation. The high school did not participate in any sports in 1925 and 1926 due to the fire that destroyed the school. Therefore, Frontenac High School can proudly boast that they have won the league title fifty percent of the years that they have competed.

Frontenac Football Team 1927

In 1927 and 1935, not only were the "black and white" undefeated, but they were also unscored upon in the regular season. The Raiders defeated Commerce, Oklahoma, in the first ever Zinc-Bowl

Game in Joplin, Missouri in 1935 by a score of 13-12. The years of 1933 - 1936 saw Frontenac enjoy a twenty six game winning streak. It was ended though, when Pittsburg High School accepted a challenge from the Raiders. They defeated Frontenac 34-7 at Brandenberg Stadium in front of a crowd that was estimated between 3,000 and 4,000 people.

In the early 1920's, the reserves of Kansas State Teachers College of Pittsburg played the Raiders. Surprisingly, the game ended in a tie with neither team scoring. Also, in 1923, Frontenac defeated Mulberry by a score of 144-0! Not only did "the black" score on every possession, but every member of the team scored at least one touchdown, including the reserves. Frontenac also defeated Joplin High School in 1940 by a score of 14-0. Because of unruly fans, the Raiders had to be escorted off the field.

The uniforms worn by the Raiders in their early football years were often obtained from the Kansas State College of Pittsburg. The athletic fund helped purchase these uniforms that the college players had previously worn, When they were not able to get regulation uniforms, the boys wore overalls or anything else they could find in their own homes. Tennis shoes were usually worn until cleated football shoes were obtained later. In the early years, when there were no buses to take players to the game, they had to ride in cars.

Frontenac made it all the way to the state championship game in the years of 1969 and 1981. Although the 1969 contest ended in a tie, Clifton (Frontenac's opponent) was awarded the Class 1-A victory because of the now defunct penetration rule. Clifton was awarded the championship because they made more penetrations into Frontenac territory than did the Raiders. Victoria upset Frontenac 20-15 for the Class 2-A State Championship in Frontenac in 1981.

This was the first and only loss for the Raiders in this year. Frontenac ended the season at 12-1.

The long rivarly between Frontenac and Arma (now Northeast because of consolidation) dates back to their first years of competition.

In 1923, it became a tradition for these two rivals to play each other on Thanksgiving Day. This game annually drew vast crowds and many times influenced the outcome of the league race. Due to the fact that the game conflicted with the beginning of the basketball season, it was discontinued in 1958. Frontenac continued to play Arma (Northeast) the last game of the regular season until a new state districting plan was devised in 1981 to determine the teams which would vie for the state title in each class.

Frontenac football teams today are still widely respected throughout the area and the state. The Raiders continue to field good teams and are consistently ranked in the Class 2-A state rankings. Hundreds of boys have earned recognition over the years with one, Bob Layden, even making it to professional football with the Detroit Lions.

Although much attention is given to the town's football teams, boy's and girl's basketball are also very popular. Many victories have come to the Raiders as a result of Frontenac's basketball tradition.

The boys have always posted good teams, but because of football, many of these teams have gone unnoticed. League titles have been won in every decade since its beginning in the 1920's.

In 1923, the Raiders defeated Mulberry 107-4 - this was the same year the football team beat Mulberry 144-0. Since the state

basketball tournament's beginnings, Frontenac has continually been respresented (the Raiders placed third in 1966) and have continued to participate in the championship tournaments.

The girl's basketball teams, though have had one of the most prolific programs in the entire state. The Raiderettes competed in basketball in the 1920's. The team that is most remembered was the 1926 team. They defeated Harry Bowlus's Cockerill team which had a forty-eight game winning streak. The Frontenac Raiderettes went to state that same year. They were the first girl's team in the county to wear bloomers instead of long skirts.

Girl's Basketball Team 1926

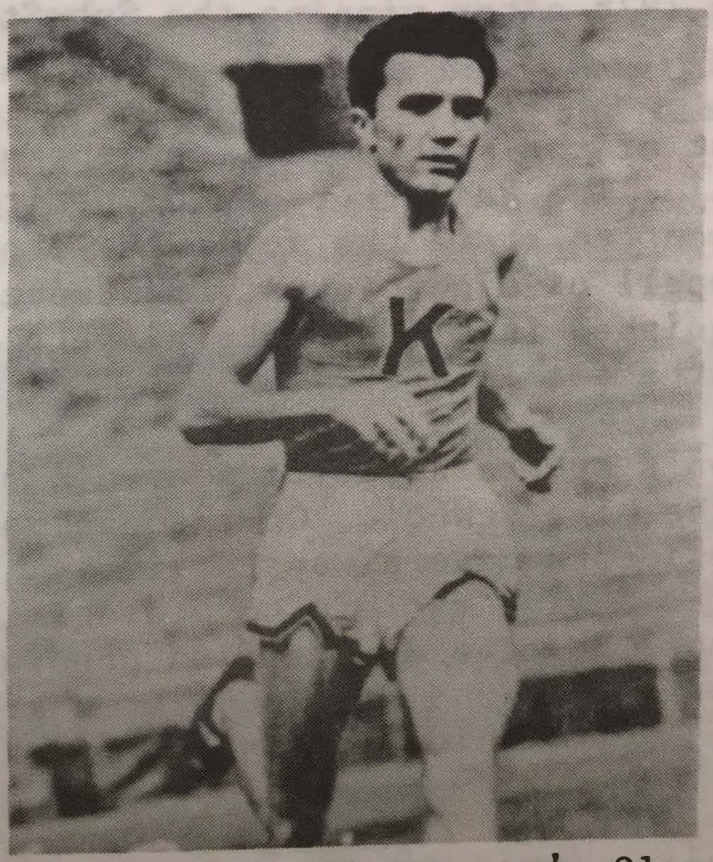
Girl's basketball was resumed in 1974 when Frontenac joined the CNC league. Since joining the league, the girls have won the title every year. No other league school has yet (1985) won a title outright. This is quite an accomplishment considering that Frontenac is one of the two smallest schools in the nine team league.

The Raiderettes have gone to state seven of the ten years since resuming play. The Class 2-A State Championship was won in both 1979 and 1982. Frontenac also was the State Runnerup in 1978.

Numerous girls have earned All-State Honors. One Frontenac player, Kelly Krumsick, went on to become an All-American at Pittsburg State University.

Although Frontenac High School has no real track, the school has participated in the sport though the years. Records have been set by Raider tracksters at all levels -- local, league, and state -- some of which still stand. Also, league championships have been attained.

The most successful of all Raider athletes is probably Archie San Romani. Told by Doctors that he may never walk again after being hit by a truck at the age of eight, he began running first as a challenge, then as a sport.



Frontenac's Olympic Runner - Archie San Romani

While in high school, San Romani won many awards for the Frontenac track team. After transferring from Bethany College to Emporia State Teachers College, he majored in music and still won seventy five medals and trophies for the track team. At the NCAA Track and Field Meet in 1935, he won the 1500 meters, and again won the event at the 1936 meet while breaking Glenn Cunningham's collegiate record. He qualified for the 1936 Olympics in Berlin, Germany after college. He competed in the 1500 meter run and placed fourth. The first six competitors ran under the Olympic record, and the winner broke the world record. Archie San Romani has been acclaimed and recognized as one of the world's greatest runners. He has been inducted into three Hall of Fames.

Girl's volleyball became a school sport in 1974. As with all of the sports in Frontenac, the girls have always posted competitive teams. They won the league title in both 1976 and 1978, and also participated in the 2-A State Tournament in 1978 after winning the Sub-State Title.

The last of the high school sports is boy's baseball. The Raiders began competition in 1971 and went to state the following year. After a dry spell of eight years, Frontenac again distinguished itself by returning to the State Tournament in 1980.

The town's sports activities aren't all confined to the high school. On the contrary, the town's residents have always actively participated in a wide variety of athletic events. Because of the diversified population, many games and traditions were continued after the immigrants settled in Frontenac.

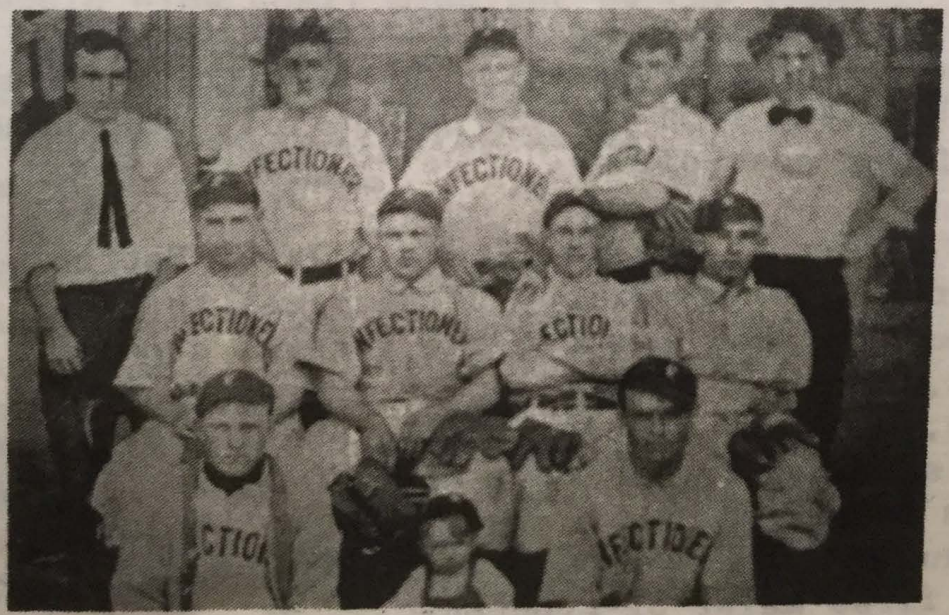
The Italian immigrants brought the game of bocci, to the United States. Many Italian

families had their own bocci courts and played whenever possible. Many Sundays families congregated at one of the local courts and held tournaments - more for pleasure than competition. Although there were many games played with bocci players from other communities in the area.

Boxing became popular in Frontenac near the beginning of the twentieth century. Local fighters fought in heavy gloves in an auditorium located downtown, and many good fighters evolved out of this make shift gym. The best boxers toured Oklahoma and Arkansas, several times winning great honors and cash prizes.

Throughout the years citizens have participated in many types of card games. In the "early days," the different nationalities all played different traditional card games. It was -- and still is -- a pleasant time for friends, neighbors and family.

The first organized soccer team in the area sprang out of Frontenac in the late 1930's. The European immigrants started the game in town. Later, five other teams from surrounding towns joined Frontenac to form a soccer league, with these teams providing enjoyment for numerous townspeople.



Confectionery Kids Basketball Team

Entertainment also arose out of Frontenac's early baseball teams. Many men actively participated in games all over the area, and some of the better ones went on to play semi-professional baseball here in Kansas and also in other states. In fact, at one time Frontenac had its own semi-professional team known as the "Confectionery Kids."

A few citizens raised and also raced Greyhound dogs in the first half of the 1900's. The first dogs were introduced to Frontenac in the first ten years of the century, and continued to be a part of the town until 1930's. Also, cocks were raised by some for fighting. Frontenac was widely known for its cock fighting at one time.

Numerous days have been spent hunting and fishing in the area by residents. For a good number of people it was--and continues to be--a pleasant way to spend a leisurely day or to make a little extra money.

Much of Frontenac's heritage is a result of its fine sports traditions, and actively participating residents. Nearly every person who ever lived in Frontenac was a participant in one sport or another at some time in his or her life.

Chronology of Businesses

1886 T.P. Waskey General Store was the first business on McKay street. Besides the general supplies and food for the miners, it also housed the first post-office.

1889 Patton's General Store - James Patton offered a large variety of services to the community. He operated the general store, bank, furniture store, lumber yard, funeral home, a livery stable, a tin shop and drug store. His slogan printed above his store was "Everything from cradle to the grave." Doc Patton also organized the Frontenac Coal Company and was the first mayor of Frontenac.

Patton's General Store

Sylvester Barber Shop was owned and operated by Gus Sylvester. He was born in 1867 in Illinois. He heard of Frontenac when he read about the Number Two mine explosion. He came to Frontenac the following year. Gus Sylvester was known as the "dean" of Frontenac business men.

1899 Stahl's Truck Garden - John Stahl was originally a zinc miner in Germany. He came to America in 1892 and dug coal. He bought a twenty acre plot of land in Frontenac. Mr. Stahl would plow until midnight by the light of the moon. His first crop was potatoes. He eventually grew and sold a large variety of vegetables. His horseradish was known all over eastern Kansas.

1900 Vacca Bakery - George Vacca was the first baker in Frontenac and the first Italian baker in this district. Mr. Vacca learned the trade in Valperza, Italy as an apprentice. He baked the bread at night and delivered it during the day. He was a city council member for four terms and a member of the school board for two terms. When George Vacca died in 1944,

his daughter Julia and husband Martin Spritzer took over the business and continued running it until 1969. Martin and Julia retired and passed the business on to their son Mike. Mike still runs the bakery using the same recipe his grandfather brought with him from Italy.

1904 The Frontenac State Bank was founded by Jacob Dittman. George W. Shelley was the vice-president and R.W. Gudgen was the cashier.

1905 Menghini Packing Plant - Antone Menghini, Sr. came to this country from Tyrol, Austria in 1899. He worked in a coal mine for a year when he opened a small shop and slaughter house across the tracks. He did his killing at night and peddled the meat with a horse and wagon during the day. In 1902, Tony asked his brother Pete to join him in this country. The two brothers started the packing house in 1904. The packing house was a successful business. Antone Menghini died in 1950 and the plant was incorporated by Antone Jr., Frank, and Bill Menghini. These three sons of Antone, Sr. operated the plant successfully for many years. After the death of Frank and Bill, Antone Jr. chose to close out the business in 1969.

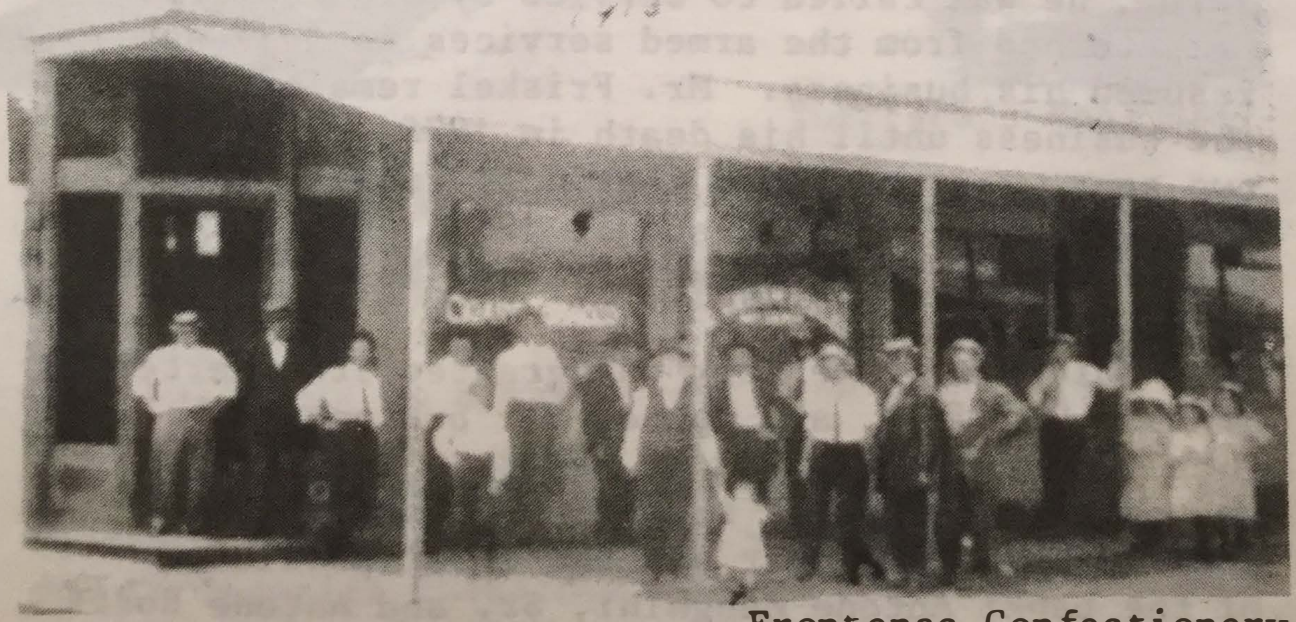
1907 Turlip Grocery Store - Frank Turlip was born in Klimarick, Austria. He emigrated to Frontenac in 1890 and worked for seventeen years. He opened the grocery store in 1907 when he was unable to continue mining because of being badly burned in an explosion at mine No. 6. He remained in business for twenty-nine years. His two sons, Tony and August took over the operation of the store.

1909 Pallucca's Market - Attillo Pallucca, a native of San Pelgrino, Italy came to the United States in 1909. He first entered the grocery business with Enrico Moriconi. They opened

Pallucca's

the Italian Cooperative store. The store carried virtually all of the necessities of life.

Mr. Pallucca and Mr. Moriconi dissolved their partnership. Attillo continued to run Pallucca's until 1954. He sold his store to his two sons, Joe and Raymond, Joe Pallucca died in 1959. Joe's son, Dick now runs the market. Pallucca's is one of the oldest businesses in Frontenac.



Frontenac Confectionery

1910 Frontenac Confectionery - John B. Loth was the owner and operator of this establishment. He and his wife, Maggie, served hamburgers, boullion, chilli, sandwiches, potato salad and pop and ice cream. It was located on the corner of McKay and Cayuga. They later sold it to Steve Salina.

1911 Scavezze's Plumbing - Jerry Scavezzee came from Peligrino, Italy in 1893, locating in Chicopee. His family was the first Italian family in that community. In 1911, Mr. Scavezzee came to Frontenac. He bought Wilson Hardware Store and started his plumbing business.

1914 Cinotto and Crosetto Meat Market - Joe Cinotto and Joe "Jap" Crosetto both came from the same Italian town of Canischio. Joe Cinotto came to America in 1903 and Jap Crosetto came in 1907. Both men worked in a meat market. they bought the business in 1914.
They ran a daily delivery service in Frontenac and the surrounding camps.

1917 Friskel's Funeral Home - John C. Friskel was born in 1893. He started working for Patton's Mortuary Service in 1911, and then in 1917, he started his own service, the Friskel Funeral Home and Ambulance Service. Less than a year later, he was called to service by his country. He returned from the armed services in 1919 and resumed his business. Mr. Friskel remained in the business until his death in 1978. His two sons, Joe and David continued running the business until Joe's death in 1984. David still operates the Friskel Funeral Home.

1919 Miner's State Bank was granted its charter January 29, 1919, and opened for business of that year with $105,000 in assets. The name was chosen because of the main industry of the area. John Beitzinger was the first president of the bank; Antone Menghini, Sr. and Antone Roitz

were vice-presidents while W. Evans Davis was the cashier.

The bank continued to grow, and it became apparent that more space was needed. On October 20, 1975, Miner's State Bank moved to its new home at 242 E. McKay.

Ziegler's Jewelry Store - John Ziegler was born in Frontenac in 1892. He quit school in the fourth grade to take a job as a "nipper" in the mines for one dollar a day. In 1913, he joined his brother-in-law in the jewelry business. He bought Benelli's Jewelry Store in 1919.

Fuertsch's Pool Hall

Fuertsch's Pool Hall - John Fuertsch became a coal digger at the age of fourteen. After returning home from World War I, he bought his brother's pool hall. When the fire of 1928 destroyed so many buildings on McKay Street, the pool hall was among them.

Seven months later he decided to rebuild. John Fuertsch remained in business until he retired due to injuries sustained in a car wreck.

1921 Hebenstreit's Garage - Louis Hebenstreit came to this area in 1912 from Steinmarch, Austria. His first job was a blacksmith for mine No. 11 north of town. He worked at various jobs until he opened his own business. He enjoyed his work and had a real gusto for living. He served on the city council for eight years and was fire chief for many years.

1926 Fedell's Drug Store - Charles Fedell came to Frontenac in 1919 when he started working as cashier for Miner's State Bank. He worked for the bank until 1926 at which time he bought Casey's Drug Store. The business was destroyed by fire in 1928. Charles Fedell rebuilt soon after and ran the drug store until his retirement.

There were many other business in Frontenac, but no dates or records for them could be found. According to Dr. Loren S. Minckley there were three bakeries, three grocery stores, two dry goods stores, three meat markets, a drug store, a jewelry store, a shoe shop, two blacksmith shops, three barber shops, a confectionery, a lumber yard, four pool halls, one movie theater, one air dome theater, and an opera house in 1917.

Newspapers--The City of Frontenac has had three newspapers in its history, although two of them only lasted a short time.

The Frontenac Journal, started by Carl Andrews, lasted less than four months. It published papers from April 18 to July 4 of the year 1897.

The German population was believed to be large enough to support a German paper so Dr. Deitrich started the Frontenac Vindicator which lasted from January 1, 1902 to October of the same year, when he suspended it for want of support.

The last newspaper Frontenac had was the Frontenac Press. It came out every Friday for eight years, starting with its first issue on June 8, 1934. It was distributed free to every home in Frontenac and the nearby camps, but there were issues sent to many people throughout all of the United States.

The two men that were responsible for starting the Frontenac Press and also served as its editors and publisher were Charles Cicero and Frank Borgna.

It would be ridiculous to close out the chapter on business without mentioning bootlegging. Next to coal, this was probably the second largest business in Frontenac. Some of the stills in Frontenac had the most sophisticated equipment of the day. Copper coils were used to keep the whiskey free of impurities. It was estimated that at one time, ninety-four stills were operating in Frontenac. Besides area consumption, the "white lighning" was transported to various parts of the country by truck. It has been told that a bottle or a drink of Frontenac's special brew could be obtained at the Chicago's World's Fair. Bootlegging, like many other businesses, has passed into the annals of history.

Street Scene

Did You Know That...

... in 1897, Frontenac's population was 188?

... Frontenac continued to grow and its population was 2854 in 1929?

Frontenac Day

... as of July, 1985, there were 2669 residents?

... Fred Dittman was the first boy born in Frontenac and Lena Noventa was the first girl?

... Doc Patton owned the first automobile in Frontenac? He also had the first wreck.

... the Frontenac Press was distributed to twenty different states?

... an entry on the city records of April 23, 1896, reads: "Moved that the city marshall be instructed to notify all jointists to close their front doors on Sunday."?

... one entire block of business burned in 1928?

... a certain corner one mile north of Frontenac got its name when the miners had to ride the train to and from the mine. After working all day, rather than ride into the depot near downtown, they would jump off in the fields nearer their homes. People said they looked like grasshoppers - hence - Grasshopper Corner.

... the outstanding early day crime of the city was the death of the McFadyn brothers on December 30, 1895? The case underwent investigation and it was discovered that the two boys had been murdered and burned in their own home.

... for many years a sort of rivalry existed between the part of Frontenac known as "uptown" and the part known as "across the tracks"? It was considered dangerous to tread on the other's "turf." Special policemen could sometimes be seen on every corner. For instance, during the first election, twenty-three policemen were on duty to keep order.

... Frontenac was the first city in Kansas to file bankruptcy under Title IX? The city wanted to issue a new series of bonds at a low interest rate payable over a period of twenty-five years. As of July 13, 1935, Frontenac was in debt $187,315.43.

... in the early days the funeral director always rode in a fancy buggy and wore a "stove pipe" hat?

... there used to be color customs for funerals? If the deceased were a child, the hearse and horses were white. If the deceased were an adult, the hearse and horses were to be black. Often properly colored nets were used

to change the color of the horses.

... First Footings was a celebration on New Year's brought over by the immigrants? They would visit homes of friends for food and drinks. The host couple would join them so the group would grow as they went from house to house.

... at Christmas, merchants would buy hard candy, apples, and oranges to give to the Mexican children and families that lived by the railroad tracks in cardboard houses?

... shivareeing was popular after newly-weds returned to their homes? Friends of the couple would surprise them by ringing bells, setting off fireworks and expect to be rewarded with food and drinks.

... the Frontenac city band of 1905 was called O'Williams Concert Band? They were nicknamed the "Green Band" because of their bright green uniforms. In 1917, the band consisted of thirty-three members. The total cash for all the instruments and uniforms was less than $5,000. They gave many free concerts in Frontenac and surrounding towns.

... Frontenac was the first city in Kansas to have a macaroni factory?

... Forsyth's owned and operated a soda pop factory in Frontenac?

... Charley Fedell held unique contests to attract attention for his drug store? In on contest, his store collected nearly 20,000 pairs of old shoes as vote getters. In another contest, two truck loads of used automobile tires were collected as part of a publicity campaign.

... as a result of the mine disaster of 1888, resolutions were adopted that required the mine operators to train and employ special

"shot firers" to fire all shots in the mine? It also stated that no miners were to be in the mine at the time of the fireings except the shot firers.

... that Lew Moriconi wrote a poem for the Frontenac Press? After publication of the paper, people from all over the country asked for copies. As a tribute to Lew who has been such a devoted "Frontenacker" we close our history with a reprint of his poem.

FRONTENAC ELEMENTARY LIBRARY

In Memory of Mother

I'm dedicating a poem this Mother's Day,
To all the mothers who have passed away.
No token of remembrance I bring home you see,
For there's no mother a-waiting for me.
So I wear this rose in my coat lapel,
In memory of her, whom I love so well.

To my boyhood days my thoughts wander back,
To our little old home by the railroad track.
E'en in my childhood I remember her well,
And the bedtime stories she used to tell.
As I grew older and needed her love,
The angels beckoned her home from above.

And when her life was ebbing fast,
I could not think it was her last.
Why didn't I hold her close and say,
"I love you, Mom, please don't go 'way."
But since she has passed to the realms of bliss,
Her love and kindness I'll always miss.

So I dedicate this poem to you,
To the dearest pal I ever knew.
I know you will hear when I kneel to pray,
"You're not forgotten, Mom, this Mother's Day."
For I wear this rose in my coat lapel,
In memory of you, whom I love so well.

By Lew Moriconi